

DPD 5800-59
26 August 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Chief, DPD
THROUGH: DPD/ACOPS
SUBJECT: P2V-7

*ELINT and attachment
to DPD-5910-59
to DD/P.*

1. In response to your request, the following information regarding utilization and deployment of the ZI based P2V-7 type aircraft has been collected and is herewith submitted for your consideration.

Recommendations are contained in paragraphs 2. and 3. of this memorandum.

a. Requirements:

(1) ELINT: The only area which demands the highest priority for ELINT collection activities is the Soviet Union/Soviet Satellite Block.

(2) Photography: A higher level of priority than that for ELINT collection exists for photographic coverage of the Soviet Union/Soviet Satellite Block.

b. Probability of Utilization:

(1) ELINT and Photographic:

(a) Although high priorities exist for ELINT and photographic collection within the Soviet Union/Soviet Block, it is unlikely that the P2V-7 is the vehicle that would be employed to satisfy the requirement. This conclusion is based on the following facts:

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1. A continuing program such as could not be effected without detection.

2. One shot, widely spaced ELINT missions would be, in all probability, successful against the highest priority targets, but would not provide continuity to maintain current orders of battle and, if detected would jeopardize other more advanced methods of overflight collection.

3. Other methods of collection (Project CHALICE) have been and continue to be highly successful and more productive, especially in the photographic field. Thus far, detection of these methods has not instigated significant publicized protest.

(b) Although no requirement presently exists, photographic and ELINT collection utilizing the P2V-7 in other areas (Western Hemisphere, Middle East/ Near East, Africa) is possible and would prove successful.

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c. Physical Vulnerability:

(1) The latest studies (conducted during the winter 1957-1958) by OSI and FI Staffs of the Agency, and the USAF indicate the P2V-7 would be able to penetrate any defense complex if utilizing tactics of low level flights under night IFR of dark of the moon conditions. It was estimated that this capability would remain in effect through 1961.

d. Duration of Utilization:

(1) The duration of utilization in its primary collection configuration (ELINT) is unknown at this writing and can be determined only by a detailed study conducted by interested members of the intelligence community.

(2) The aircraft can be utilized in its secondary (photography) and tertiary (paramilitary) roles for a length of time limited only by deterioration of the airframe.

c. Cost Factors:

(1) The expense involved in maintaining one P2V-7 aircraft within the ZI Unit is estimated to be approximately \$500,000 per year.

(2) To position the aircraft in the Far East with the remainder of the P2V-7 fleet, would incur an added expense of \$92,500 [redacted] If the "W" system [redacted] is retained in the aircraft an additional expense for technical representatives would amount to an estimated \$50,000.

(3) If the P2V-7 is placed on bailment to the U. S. Navy, certain skilled technicians will have to be retained at Agency expense to insure the aircraft can be returned to an ELINT collection configuration in a reasonable length of time.

f. Crew Proficiency:

(1) If the aircraft is placed on loan to the Navy or sent to the Far East, there is no means whereby ELINT operators presently in Agency employ can maintain adequate proficiency.

2. In view of the above, it is recommended that members of the intelligence community make a detailed study to include but not be restricted to the following:

- a. Review and re-evaluation of requirements.
- b. Based upon re-evaluated requirements, the type of capability to be maintained.
- c. Suitability of the P2V-7 to fulfill the capability.
- d. Available substitutes for the P2V-7 or recommended modernization of current collections systems and methods.

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3. Further recommendations are as follows:

a. Until such a review as outlined above is completed a capability should be maintained. If the requirement exists to maintain a capability in a manner to insure the most rapid reaction time with the highest degree of proficiency, the aircraft should be based in the ZI unit with the resultant high cost. If, on the basis of improbability of utilization, high cost of retention of one aircraft to a single unit, and existence of other systems, the requirement is considered to be of a lesser degree, the aircraft should be placed either in the Far East or on loan to the Navy.

[Redacted]
Chief, Air Section, DPD

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